



**Dismantling the Dominant Narrative Around
Alcohol Use in College Students**

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Pronouns: She/Her/Hers



Road Map

- Dominant Narrative around College Alcohol
- Research From The Field
- Influences and Road to Color of Drinking
- Color of Drinking Results
- Summary



**What does drinking look
like on your campus?**



Dominant narrative at UW–Madison



Research influences on college alcohol prevention over time



Weschler Harvard Alcohol Study 1993–2001

- Introduced term “binge drinking”
- Secondhand consequences
 - Disruption to sleep and study
 - Property damage, noise disruption, and police visits
 - Verbal, physical, and sexual assault
 - Arguments with intoxicated individuals
- Students of color drink at lower rates and help lower binge drinking in white students



Research and Interventions from the field

**A CALL TO ACTION:
CHANGING THE CULTURE OF
DRINKING AT U.S. COLLEGES**

Task Force of the National Advisory Commission on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
www.collegedrinking.net

2002

**REDUCING ALCOHOL PROBLEMS ON CAMPUS:
A GUIDE TO PLANNING
AND EVALUATION**

**What Colleges Need to Know Now
An Update on College Drinking Research**

College Drinking and Its Consequences: New Data

The comprehensive reports released by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism's (NIAAA) Task Force on College Drinking turned a national spotlight on the problem of harmful drinking among college students. The central report, *A Call to Action: Changing the Culture of Drinking at U.S. Colleges*, has proven influential in the college alcohol and other drug (AOD) prevention and treatment field. Statistics first introduced in the report are now routinely used to convey the magnitude of college drinking problems and their consequences. Policymakers, legal experts, and organizations that provide college programming assistance have modified their efforts to reflect the Task Force recommendations.

College drinking research remains a high priority for NIAAA, and ongoing projects continue to yield important new information. This bulletin summarizes these recent findings with updated statistics, analysis, and recommendations.

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- College Drinking and Its Consequences: New Data
- Interventions—What Is the New Research Telling Us?
- Defining Binge Drinking
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- Disrupting Research and Collaborative Efforts
- Tracking Students' Drinking Patterns
- A Word on Alcohol Poisoning
- Questions Campus Leaders Should Ask
- Keep an Eye on...

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2007

**Planning Alcohol Interventions
Using NIAAA's
COLLEGEAIM**

NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON ALCOHOL ABUSE AND ALCOHOLISM

2015

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism
College Drinking

SPECIAL MESSAGE REGARDING COVID-19: In light of the current coronavirus pandemic, it is especially important for all college students to take the necessary measures to protect their health and well-being, particularly if schools have resumed in-person or hybrid classes.

Especially now, students and college administrators need to understand the risks associated with alcohol use. For more information, please see the link from NIAAA Director George F. Koob, Ph.D., about alcohol misuse among college students during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Harmful and underage college drinking are significant public health problems, and they exact an enormous toll on the lives of students on campuses across the United States.

Drinking at college has become a ritual that students often see as an integral part of their higher education experience. Some students come to college with established drinking habits, and the college environment can lead to a problem. According to a national survey, almost 55 percent of full-time college students ages 18 to 22 drank alcohol in the past month and about 37 percent engaged in binge drinking during that same time frame. For the purposes of this survey, binge drinking was defined as consuming 5 drinks or more on one occasion for males and 4 drinks or more for females. However, some college students drink at least twice that amount, a behavior that is often called high-intensity drinking.

Consequences of Harmful and Underage College Drinking
Drinking affects college students, their families, and college communities.

Death

The most recent statistics from the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) estimate that about 1,519 college students ages 18 to 24 die from alcohol-related unintentional injuries, including motor vehicle crashes.

Assault

The most recent NIAAA statistics estimate that about 896,000 students ages 18 to 24 are assaulted by another student who has been drinking.

Sexual Assault

The most recent statistics from NIAAA estimate that about 97,000 students ages 18 to 24 report experiencing alcohol-related sexual assault or date rape.

What is Binge Drinking?

Many college drinking problems are related to binge drinking. NIAAA defines binge drinking as a pattern of drinking alcohol that brings blood alcohol concentration (BAC) to 0.08 percent—or 0.08 grams of alcohol per 100 milliliters of a person's blood. BAC percent corresponds to consuming 5 or more drinks (male), or 4 or more drinks (female), in about 2 hours.

Drinking this way can pose serious health and safety risks, including car crashes, drunk-driving arrests, sexual assault, and injuries. Over the long term, frequent binge drinking can damage the heart and other organs.

NIAA is a U.S. government agency. © 2020. 108 pages. 108 illustrations.

2020



**Research didn't support
some UW–Madison dynamics**



UW–Madison fast facts

- 45,317 graduate and undergraduate students
- Urban campus
- Predominately white university (65%)
- Land-grant institution
- Research 1 university
- Division 1 university
- 88% of undergraduate students/families are in the 4th percentile of wealth \$119,000+



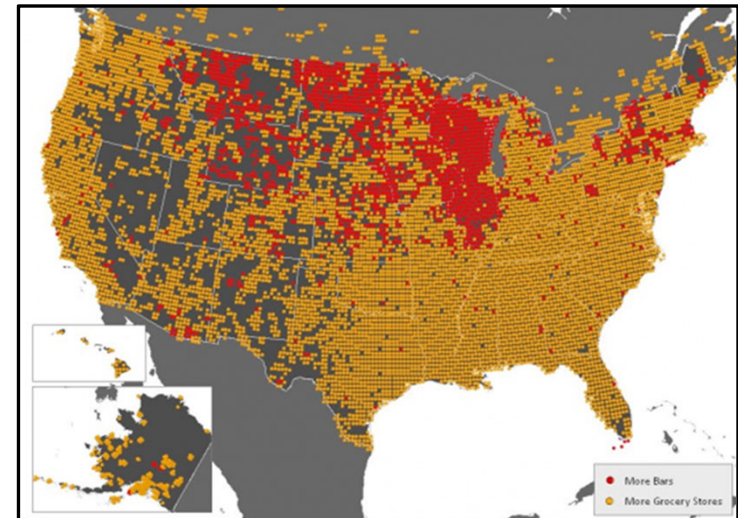
Context of alcohol culture

- 50% of undergraduate students drink at high-risk
- Students who come to UW–Madison drink alcohol at higher rates than other universities
- Average PBT of students transported to detox = 0.221



Madison environmental alcohol factors

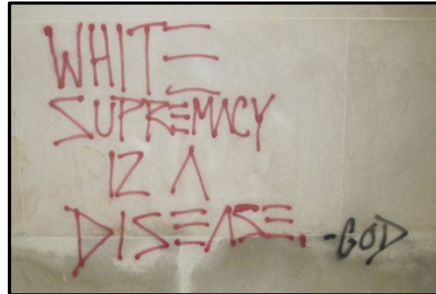
- **Availability**
376 establishments serve/sell alcohol within 3 miles of campus
- **Affordability:** Top 3 for lowest alcohol tax in U.S.
- **Accountability:** State laws protect business
- **Acceptability:** Wisconsin is the second highest binge drinking state among 18–44 year-olds



Campus racial climate



Spring 2015:
Tony Robinson
shooting



Spring 2016:
55 campus hate
and bias incidents



Fall 2016:
Noose Incident at
football game



Fall 2020:
Kenosha shooting

ASM votes 'no confidence' in UWPD, votes to support UW BIPOC Coalition

No confidence vote signifies distrust in UWPD, call to reform, ASM rep. says



Fall 2019:
Homecoming video



UW–Madison climates combine

Casual use of racist slurs was routine at fraternity suspended by UW-Madison

i have been attacked on 3 occasions bc white ppl are drunk & racist & love to aggress folk & i do be bout tht life. I will defend myself

#TheRealUW is me intentionally avoiding certain parties or gatherings or areas of Madison so I don't get harassed for who I am

#TheRealUW Being called the N-Word by some drunk is par for the course.

Swastikas drawn on dorm white boards, UW-Madison officials say

Getting denied into a party while your white friends gain entry or getting followed out to ask if you'd stole something #TheRealUW

When you go out and a white student won't let you into a party, calls you and your friend niggers and cunts and throws a drink #therealUW

UW First Wave scholar subjected to hateful language, spit on face in campus dorm

UW Badger Herald



UW-Madison investigating after Ho-Chunk elder heckled with 'war cry' shouts

SECOND WEEK OF CLASSES LAST FALL SOME GUY CONTINUALLY NAMED OFF DIFFERENT SPICES BECAUSE HE COULDN'T REMEMBER MY NAME AND STATED "YOU JUST REMIND ME OF SPICES," (MY NAME SOUNDS NOTHING LIKE A SPICE, I'M JUST INDIAN). A BARISTA AT A COFFEE SHOP I FREQUENT CALLED ME CINNAMON EVERY TIME I WENT IN DESPITE ME CORRECTING HER EVERY SINGLE TIME (THIS HAS ALSO HAPPENED AT A DIFFERENT BAR BY A WHITE GIRL WHO EVEN HAD FRIENDS TELLING HER TO STOP). A GUY TRIED TO CONVINCE ME TO COME TO THE AGRICULTURE FRAT TO PARTY BECAUSE "AGRICULTURE HAS COWS... THERE ARE BROWN COWS YOU'D BE FINE!"

SO I'M SE ASIAN. LAST YEAR I LIVED IN THE DORMS. THERE'S ONE EXPERIENCE OF RACISM OR A MICROAGGRESSION THAT STUCK OUT TO ME THE MOST. IN THE FIRST TWO WEEKS OF LIVING IN THE DORMS, I CAUGHT A GROUP OF GUYS WHO CAME BY TO LAUGH AT THE NON-"AMERICAN" AKA NON-WHITE SOUNDING NAMES ON OUR DOORS (SINCE ALL DOORS FEATURE THE NAMES OF WHOEVER LIVES INSIDE THERE). THERE WERE A LOT OF POC ON MY FLOOR SO IT REALLY WAS JUST A "FUN" TRIP SO THEY COULD GET A QUICK LAUGH. THE MOST DISAPPOINTING PART WAS THAT IT WAS LIKE TWO WHITE GUYS AND THEIR ASIAN FRIEND. WATCHING THEIR ASIAN FRIEND LAUGH ALONG WITH THEM HURT THE MOST. OBVIOUSLY I DON'T KNOW WHAT HIS STORY IS, BUT HE WAS SO COMPLACENT AT THE RIDICULE OF OTHER BIPOC. I'M JUST SO ANGRY AND DISAPPOINTED.



Road to Color of Drinking

- AlcoholEdu data tour
- Student government inquiry
- Field research was inadequate for our setting
- Focus groups/survey development with student input



Color of Drinking survey results

Link to Booklet:

uhs.wisc.edu/prevention/colorofdrinking/



Color of Drinking survey completion

Color of Drinking 1

- Census of undergraduate students of color only
- 10.8% completion rate
- No incentives were given

Color of Drinking 2

- Census of undergraduate students of color
- Sample of white undergraduate students
- 25.2% completion rate for students of color
- 16.7% completion rate for white students
- All participant received an \$5 Amazon gift card



Describe the alcohol culture at UW–Madison

Themes that emerged

Students of Color

- The alcohol culture is prevalent.
- The alcohol culture is how UW–Madison students socialize.
- The pressure to participate in the drinking culture is high.

White Students

- The alcohol culture is how UW–Madison students socialize.
- The UW–Madison alcohol culture encourages drinking heavily.
- Participation in the alcohol culture is dependent on who you socialize with.

Students of Color**The alcohol culture is prevalent.**

"I think that it's a pretty prevalent part of campus culture - I've met a handful of students who have cited UW's "party scene" as one of their deciding factors when they considered attending the university. Whether you want to avoid alcohol or not people will have it, which is unfortunate for those who choose not to drink. "

"It's strong, everywhere, encouraged, supported, expected, ridiculed, and accepted all at once. "Everyone does it," is a saying that applies here. Alcohol consumption is rampant across UW by students of all ages. For better or for worse, it is a cornerstone of UW."

The alcohol culture is how UW-Madison students socialize.

"The alcohol culture at UW-Madison is extremely active. Drinking is a form of recreation to both take the edge off of the stresses of being in college and as a way to socialize and enjoy time with friends. It is the go-to option for most activities. Social engagements are assumed to have alcohol."

"Alcohol is something that is "required to have a good time" in the eyes of many students at UW-Madison. It's viewed as essential at parties, essential to wind down, essential to any socialization."

The pressure to participate in the drinking culture is high.

"The drinking culture at UW-Madison is also very IN YOUR FACE and annoying. Everyone pressures people to drink, even if they say they don't. There is no escape. Even if you are not a drinker, you are constantly hearing your neighbors come home drunk or listening to songs that promote drinking. I wish it would stop."

"People drink basically every day at UW-Madison and if you don't, then you are basically forced to drink at different events when going out. My freshman year, I was forced to drink alcohol as about ten people stood around me until I drank (one of which was forcing the bottle into my mouth). This past year I went out and this guy says to me, "I would love to see you take this shot" as he and his friends stood around me staring me down like I was an animal and being an African American woman, I am sure you can imagine how that made me feel. I ended up not taking the shot but I did leave the bar and no person should be forced out of a bar just because they don't want to do what everyone else is doing. Every time I go out, there has never been a time where someone did not force me to drink or take a shot of something. "

White Students**The alcohol culture is how UW-Madison students socialize.**

"Alcohol is used commonly by UW-Madison students, but in varying degrees with different social circles. I have noticed that certain friends drink more, and I am more likely to drink more when around them than when I am with friends who don't drink as heavily."

"Alcohol is a permanent and predominant part of Madison's culture. It's what a lot of people do on the weekend and activity that brings people together for a variety of social events."

The UW-Madison alcohol culture encourages drinking heavily.

"Practically every person I've met over the past two years drinks heavily and encourages the people around them to drink and party. I didn't drink before coming to UW and now I feel pressure to drink every weekend."

"People drink very frequently, even those who you wouldn't have expected to. One of my friends from high school now drinks and parties on some weekends--he was a totally quiet kid before. It's terrible on the weekends; I live in an apartment and there are parties on every floor from Thursday night to sometimes even Sunday night, starting anywhere from early evening to 3 or 4 in the morning. Seeing drunk college kids on the streets on a Saturday afternoon on football game days is not an uncommon sight. In short, it seems like everyone here is an alcoholic."

Participation in the alcohol culture is dependent on who you socialize with.

"Alcohol is used commonly by UW-Madison students, but in varying degrees with different social circles. I have noticed that certain friends drink more, and I am more likely to drink more when around them than when I am with friends who don't drink as heavily."

"The alcohol culture at UW-Madison involves a lot of binge-drinking both in the house party setting and at local college bars. The younger undergraduate students drink illegals at house parties, in dorms, or with fake I.D.s. I'm not sure about the amounts of students that partake in illegal activity, but I know from my experience many do. Over 21, many students go out to drink and average of 2 times a week, but consume alcohol more often than that."

Color of Drinking takeaways

1. Alcohol culture influences microaggressions and retention of students of color.
2. Students of all racial identities report feeling unsafe in high-risk drinking environments. *Safety for students of color in these high-risk drinking environments is impacted more.*
3. High-risk drinking is tied to student connection and belonging
4. Alcohol use by white students is a protective factor for academic and social success. *Allowances and exceptions are made academically to support drinkers and the alcohol culture.*



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Microaggressions

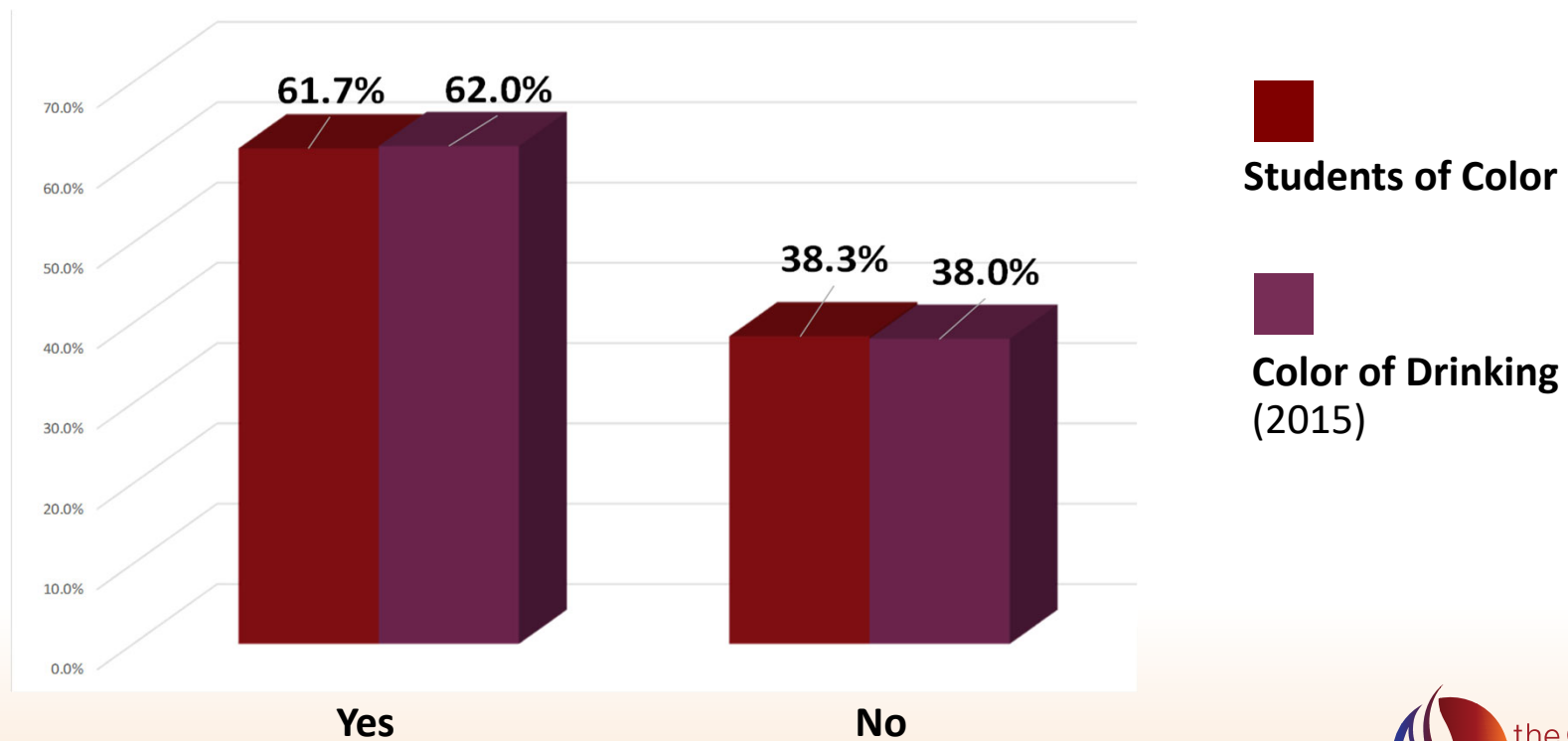
For this survey, microaggressions were defined as:

Brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults toward people of color.

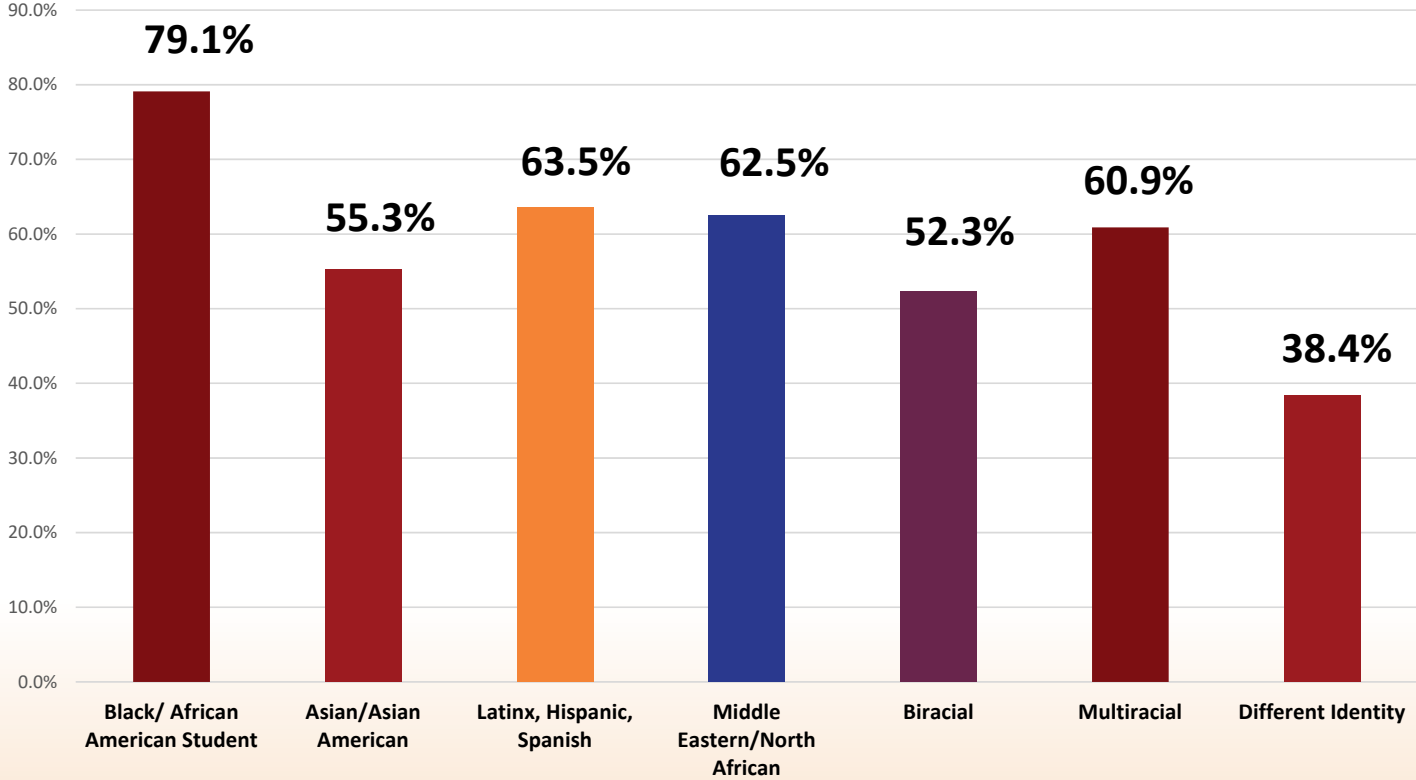
(Sue et al, 2007)



Have you experienced microaggressions at UW–Madison?



Experienced a microaggression at UW–Madison



Harassment based on student's race, ethnicity, or assumed race and ethnicity

- *"Students who ask to touch my hair, students who touch/pull my hair without asking, probing questions about how my hair works and if it's real, constant comments at every small change in my hair, "your hair isn't cool/pretty anymore" after removing weave, casual use of racial slurs from friends and acquaintances, "you're very articulate", "you're pretty cool!" in comparison to other black people, "you all are so amazing" referring to groups of black women in stem, multiple people referring to me by the name of the other black woman in my dorm (who looks nothing like me), "it was tough for black women, but it was hard for ALL WOMEN back then," and more I'm sure aren't coming to mind."*

Classroom interactions

- *"Professors mostly; one has commented on how articulate I am. Another professor accused me of plagiarism (when I didn't) because she didn't think I had the capabilities to write well."*
- *"I sometimes find in my classrooms that people often chose to ignore me or turn to a different person when given time to discuss certain topics. I have to go out of my way to talk to others, but even then, I can sense some individuals do not feel comfortable talking to me."*

Alcohol-related microaggressions

- *"I have been frequently confused with other south Asian students who do not look like me by intoxicated people. One time a very drunk white guy (college student) told me he rules Saudi Arabia (where I am not from) and used the n word. I've heard lots of white students use the n word. I've frequently heard people complain about their TA's accents. I've been harassed by presumable straight white men because I am queer."*
- *"Touching my hair, describing how I smell (coconut oil smell=Pina coladas apparently to drunk people), making remarks about who I am with based on their race, judging my opinions on an issue due to my race, list goes on to be honest."*

Stereotypes about race ethnicity or assumed race and ethnicity

- *"Always asked about where I'm from, get remarks and threats made at me because of being Mexican, had people make fun of me right in front of me because I'm Mexican, been asked if I'm an illegal immigrant or if anyone in my family is, have been told that I'm going to be deported."*

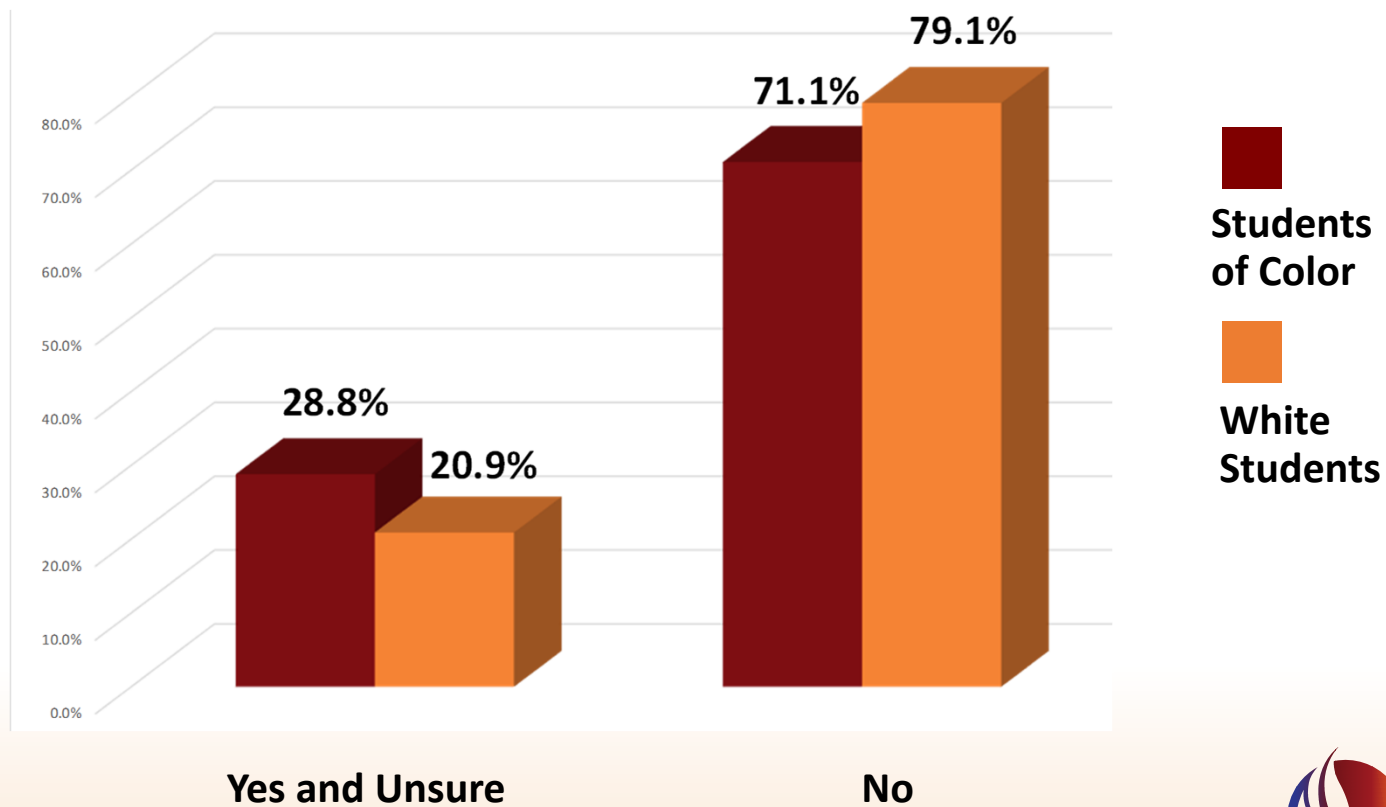
Student Quotes

- **3 words: "Cinco de Mifflin."** *That particular weekend was the **most degrading** I have ever felt on university property. Three white males were already drinking and passed out in my dorm; I was doing laundry and they made a comment about how **that's all I was good for — doing laundry.**"*
- *"Drunk White men tend to have **WAY more boldness in being racist.** Spoke to my Chinese friend saying '**ching chong**' and things like this nature."*

-Student of Color responses from Color of Drinking 1



Have you considered leaving the university?



Reasons for considering leaving

Students of color

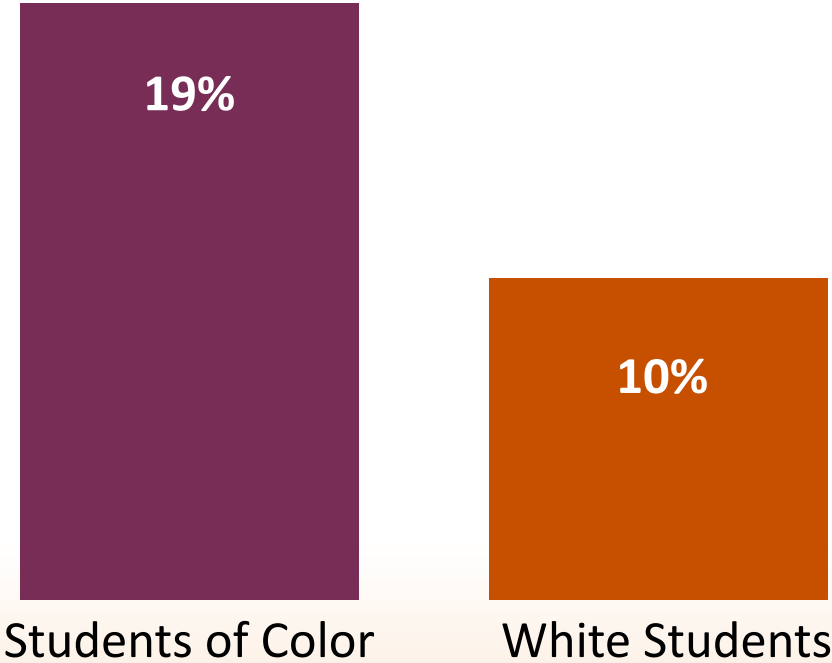
- 55% Racial climate
- 45% Mental health
- 40% Academic reasons
- 25% Financial reasons
- 23% Interpersonal reasons
- 20% Alcohol climate

White students

- 40% Academic reasons
- 38% Mental health
- 33% Interpersonal reasons
- 30% Alcohol climate
- 24% Other reasons
- 19% Financial reasons

2016 UW–Madison Climate Survey

Have you seriously considered leaving UW–Madison?



Reasons for Leaving

Students of Color

- 58% Campus climate and culture
- 37% Personal reasons
- 30% Unsafe or hostile environment
- 29% Financial concerns
- 26% Relations with other students
- 23% Academics too difficult
- 22% Managing demands of schoolwork
- 16% Too much of a party atmosphere
- 15% Difficulty managing demands of school and activism
- 15% Other academic issue

White Students

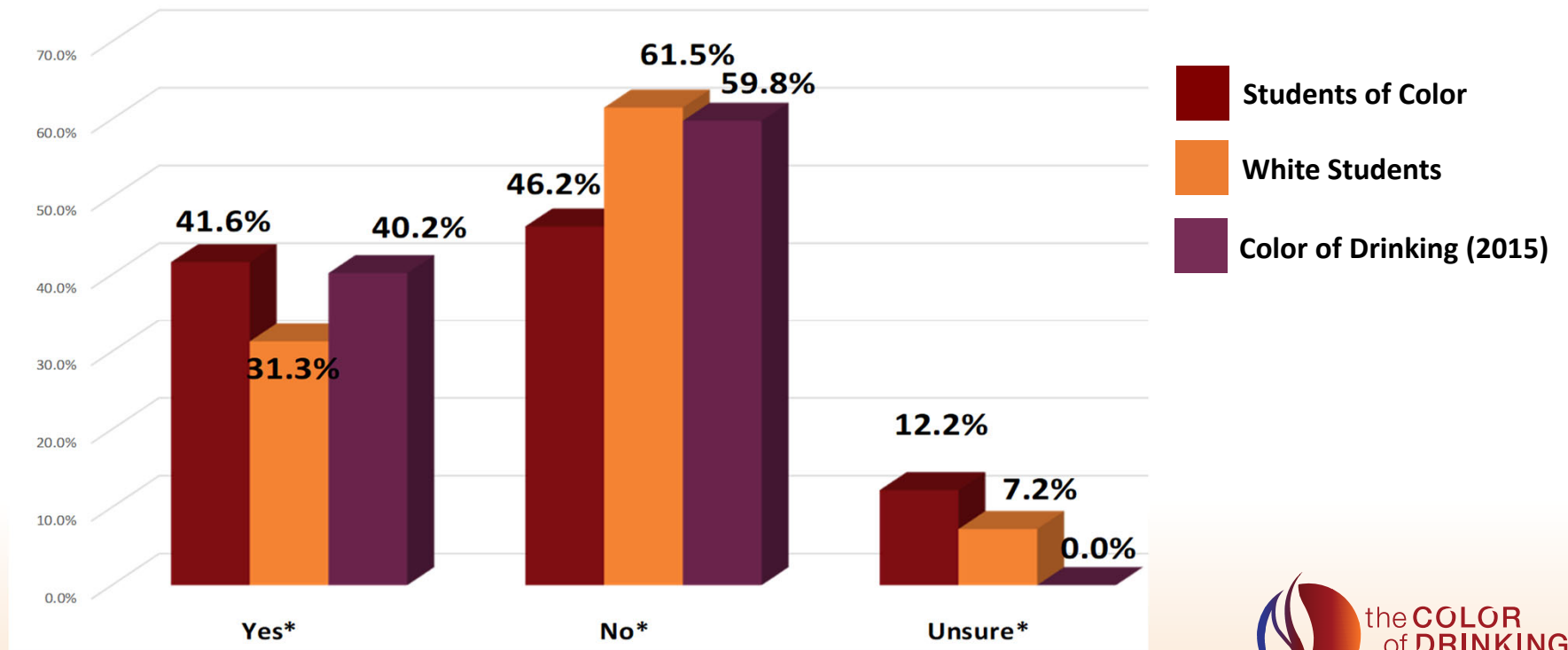
- 40% Personal reasons
- 36% Financial concerns
- 27% Academics too difficult
- 27% Campus climate and culture
- 26% Difficulty managing demands of school and activism
- 24% Other academic issue
- 22% University is too big
- 18% Relations with other students
- 17% Career change options
- 17% Too much of a party atmosphere



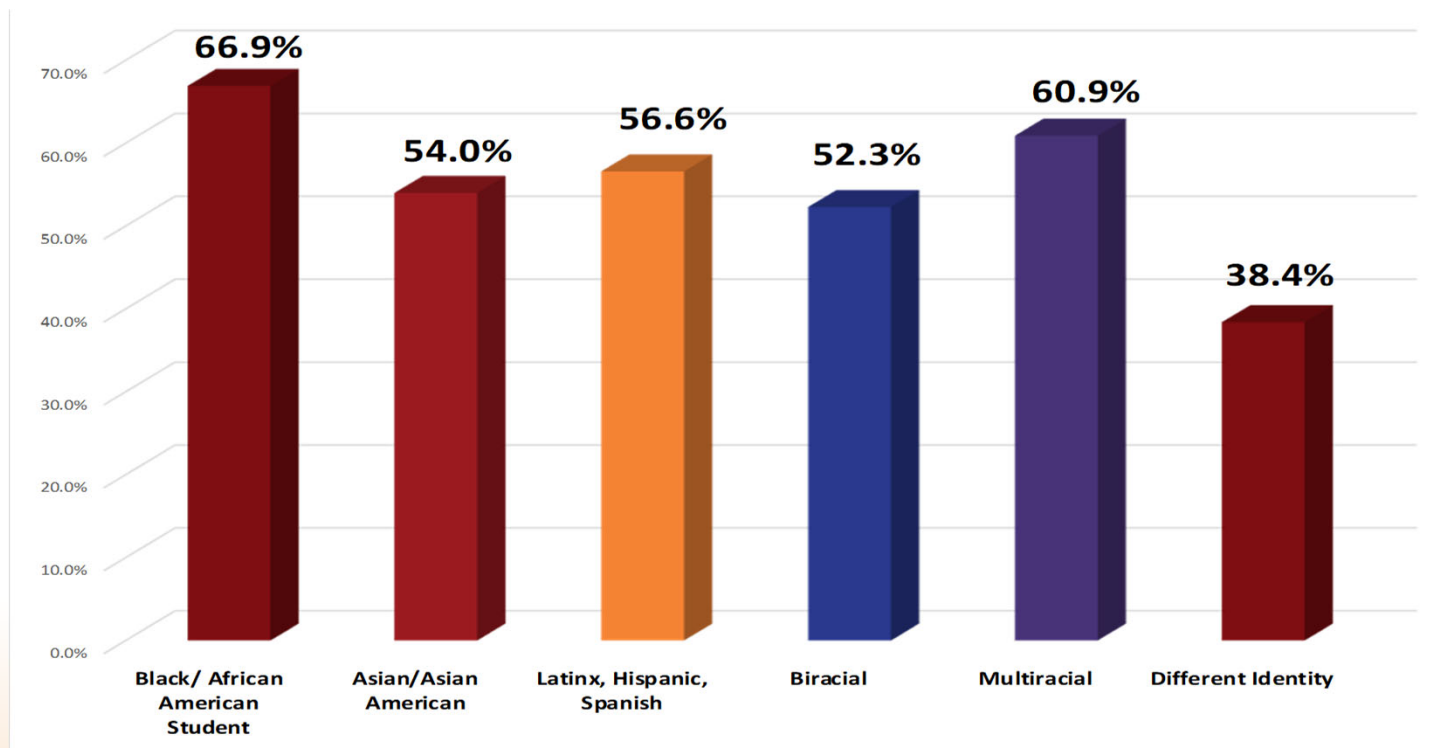
Color of Drinking Takeaways

1. Alcohol culture influences microaggressions and retention of students of color.
2. Students of all racial identities report feeling unsafe in high-risk drinking environments. *Safety for students of color in high-risk drinking environments is impacted more.*
3. High-risk drinking is tied to student connection and belonging
4. Alcohol use by white students is a protective factor for academic and social success. *Allowances and exceptions are made academically to support drinkers and the alcohol culture.*

Do you avoid specific areas due to concerns about alcohol use of others?



Do you avoid specific areas on or off campus due to concerns about alcohol use of others?



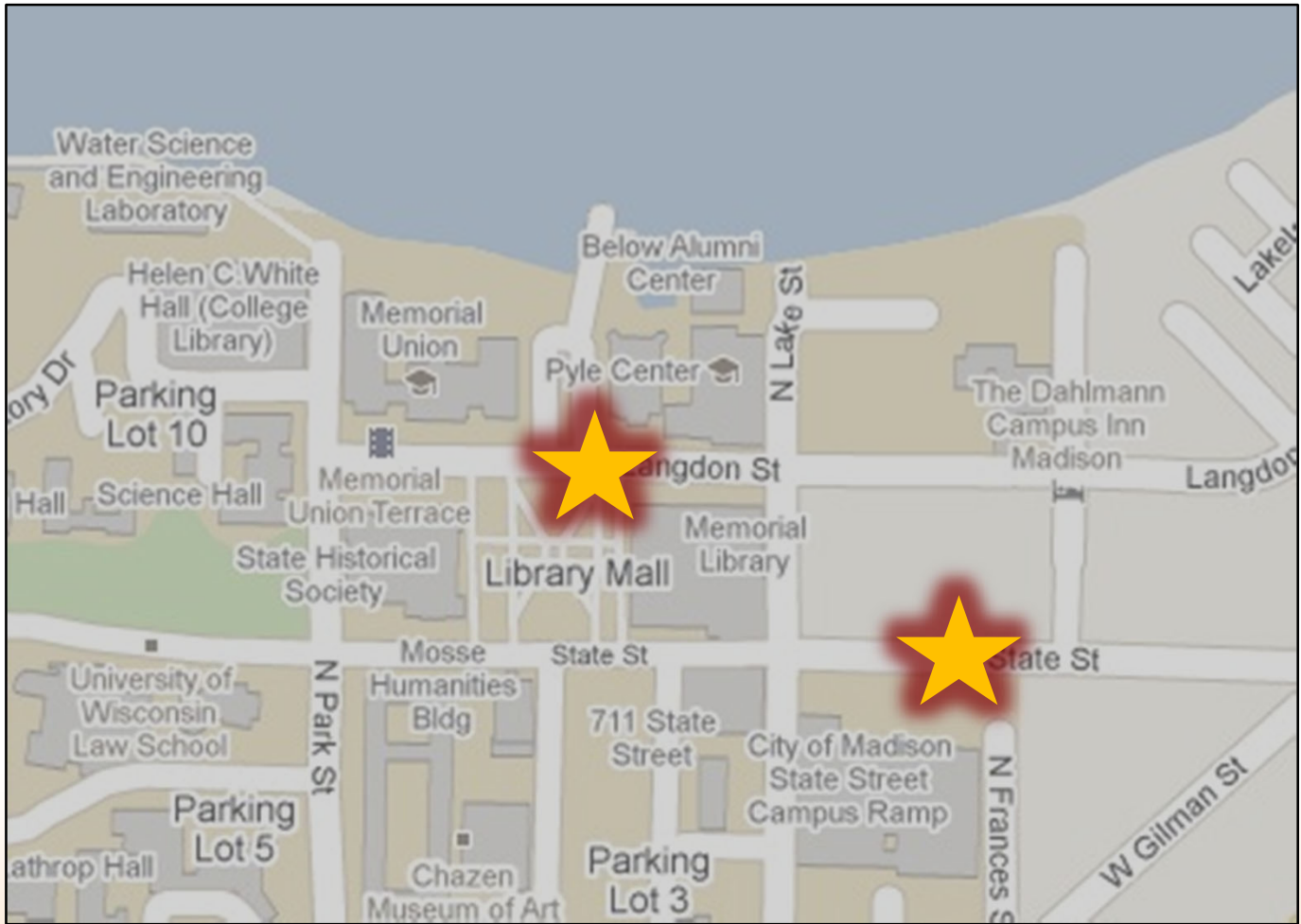
Students of Color

- 83% Fraternity/sorority housing
- 67% Langdon Street
- 48% House parties
- 47% State Street and bars
- 42% Tailgates
- 27% Lakeshore Path
- 23% Camp Randall
- 21% Southeast Residence Halls
- 15% Regent Street
- 5% Other locations
- 4% Lakeshore Residence Halls

White Students

- 86% Fraternity/sorority housing
- 73% Langdon Street
- 54% State Street and bars
- 49% House parties
- 38% Tailgates
- 28% Southeast Residence Halls
- 23% Lakeshore Path
- 21% Camp Randall
- 14% Regent Street
- 4% Lakeshore Residence Halls
- 3% Other locations





Student Quotes

*“Honestly, there’s nowhere in this city where I **feel less safe** than on **Langdon Street** on a Friday or Saturday night.”*

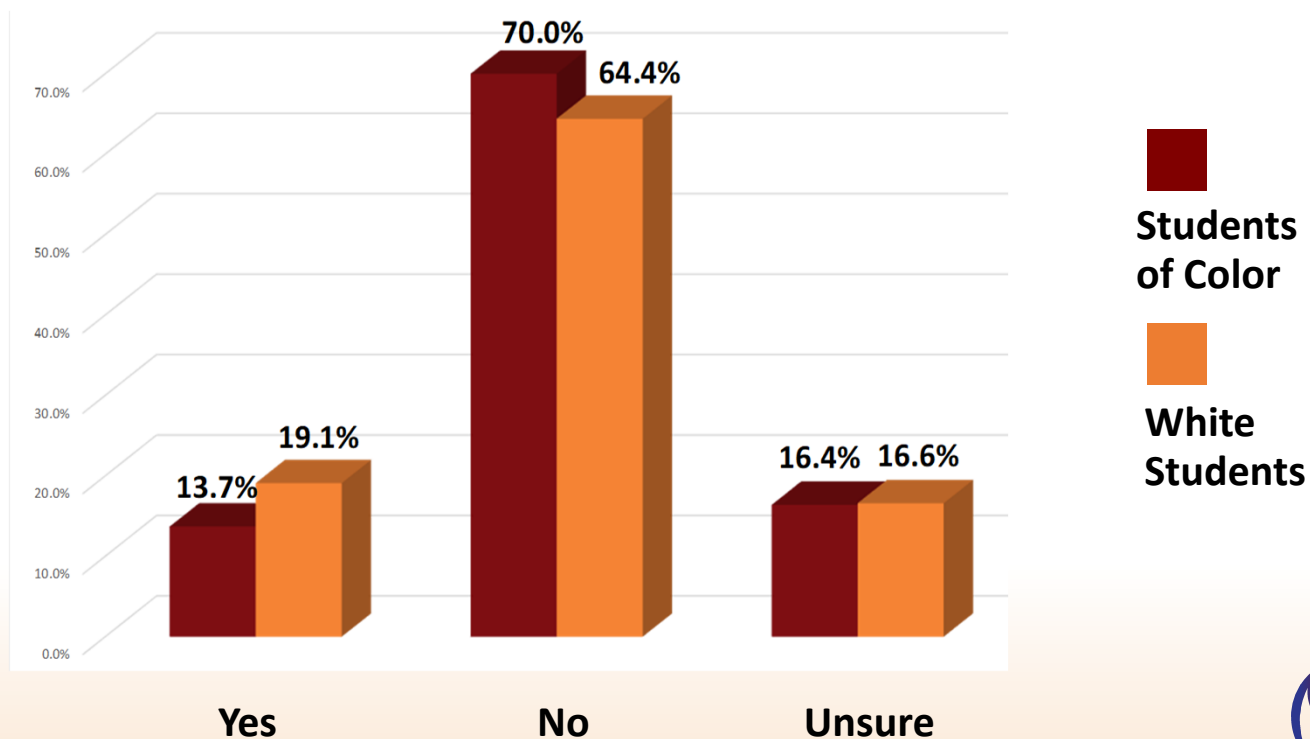
*“I feel it’s **dangerous** to be out at night without people with me, being smaller and Asian. I get **yelled at by drunk people** and out of cars enough as it is.”*

*“I don't like walking by the bars on **State Street** or university at night. There are usually **drunk people** out on the street and I don't like to **get in their way.**”*

-Student of Color responses from Color of Drinking 1



Has alcohol use impacted your health (physical, mental, overall well being) in the time you have attended UW–Madison?



Students of Color**Alcohol use has impacted my mental health.**

"I was diagnosed with depression before I came to campus and as a result I used alcohol to deal with it. It progressively got worse as I started to drink more. It was to the point I was contemplating suicide again, the drinking culture here isn't good for a person who doesn't know how to deal with depression and is looking for an outlet such as myself."

"I often use alcohol as a way to forget about my problems, which just makes it that much harder to face my problems when I sober up. So I feel like my mental health has been affected because I defer my problems, which makes me sadder in the long run."

Alcohol use has caused me to be concerned for my safety.

"ITS SAD TO SEE MY PEERS KILLING THEMSELVES AND MAKES ME VERY ANXIOUS TO BE AROUND OR INTERACT WITH MUCH OF THE STUDENT BODY. CONSTANT PARANOIA THAT I WILL BE RAPED OR SEXUALLY ASSULTED. I WOULD LIKE TO HEALTHILY CONSUME BUT AM AFRAID SOMEONE WILL TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ME. VOMIT MAKES ME SAD AND INDUCES ANXIETY."

Alcohol use has impacted my social life.

"Drinking beer with new friends is kind of like having coffee with new friends. It's a socializing event. It's a way to make friends and be with old friends."

Alcohol use has impacted my physically.

"It's negatively impacted my health; has made me struggle with me weight. I also feel so pressured to drink heavily which affects my social circles."

White Students**Alcohol use has impacted my physically**

"Alcohol sometimes makes you feel sluggish the next day and unable to function, it can also make me say/do things I may regret in the morning."

"Tore meniscus and broken fibula due to drinking-related injuries."

"I gained weight due to my drinking."

"I know I don't get over colds as quickly if I drink frequently."

Alcohol use has impacted my social life.

"I feel very anxious in situations when there are drunk people. For example, I leave parties early before people start getting drunk, and I was pressured to drink at a field trip I went on."

Alcohol use has impacted my mental health. *"I felt encouraged to drink for stress relief instead of seeking help for mental health, or for pursuing health stress-relieving activities."*

"It has lead me to partake in things I wouldn't have sober. Then when I am sober I feel regret and self-conscious about my decisions I made while drunk."

Alcohol use has impacted my academics.

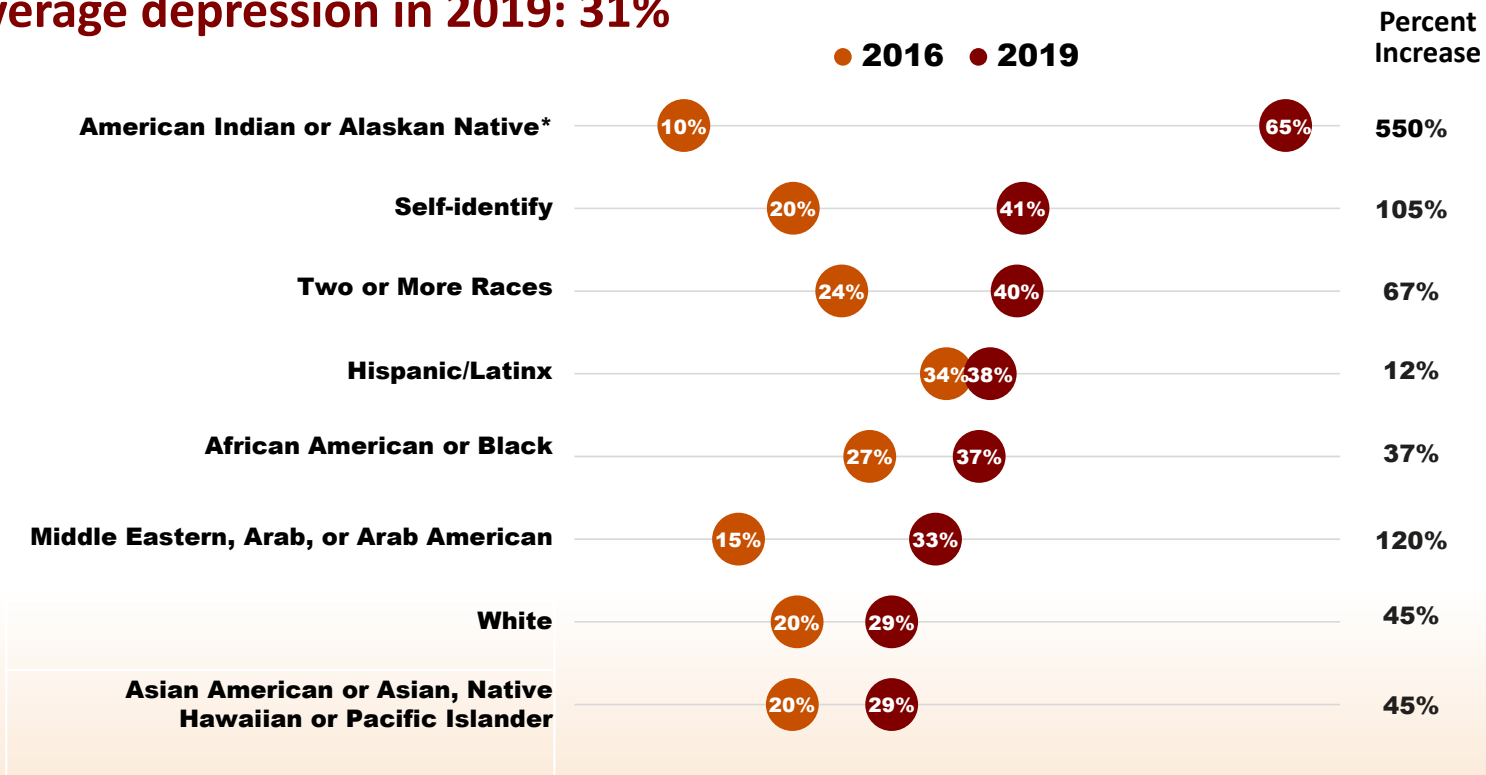
"1st year did not know limits and got sick twice due to overconsumption of alcohol, which in turn took away from studying."

"Major disruption to study and sleep habits"



Depression is highest in racially marginalized populations

Average depression in 2019: 31%

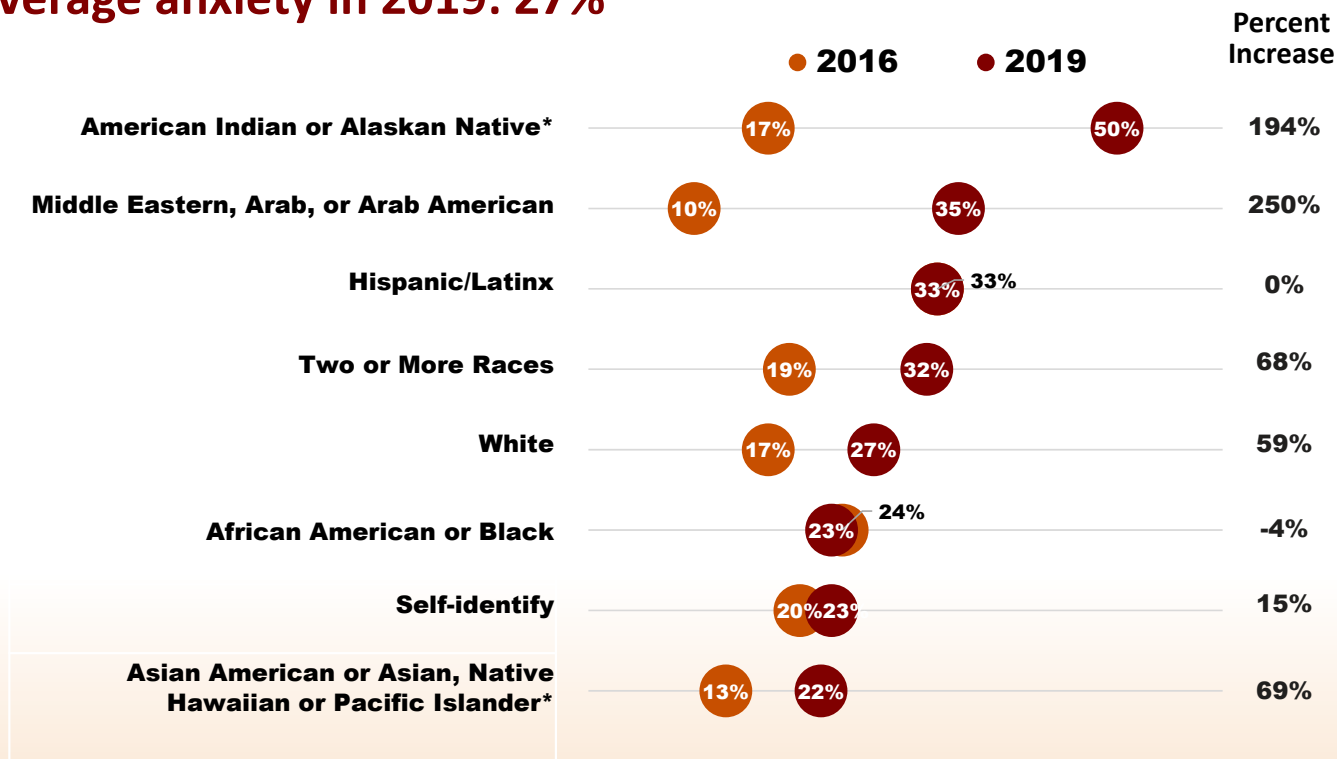


* Relatively small sample size (2016 n = 15; 2019 n = 17)



Anxiety is highest in racially marginalized populations

Average anxiety in 2019: 27%



* Relatively small sample size (2016 n = 15; 2019 n = 17)



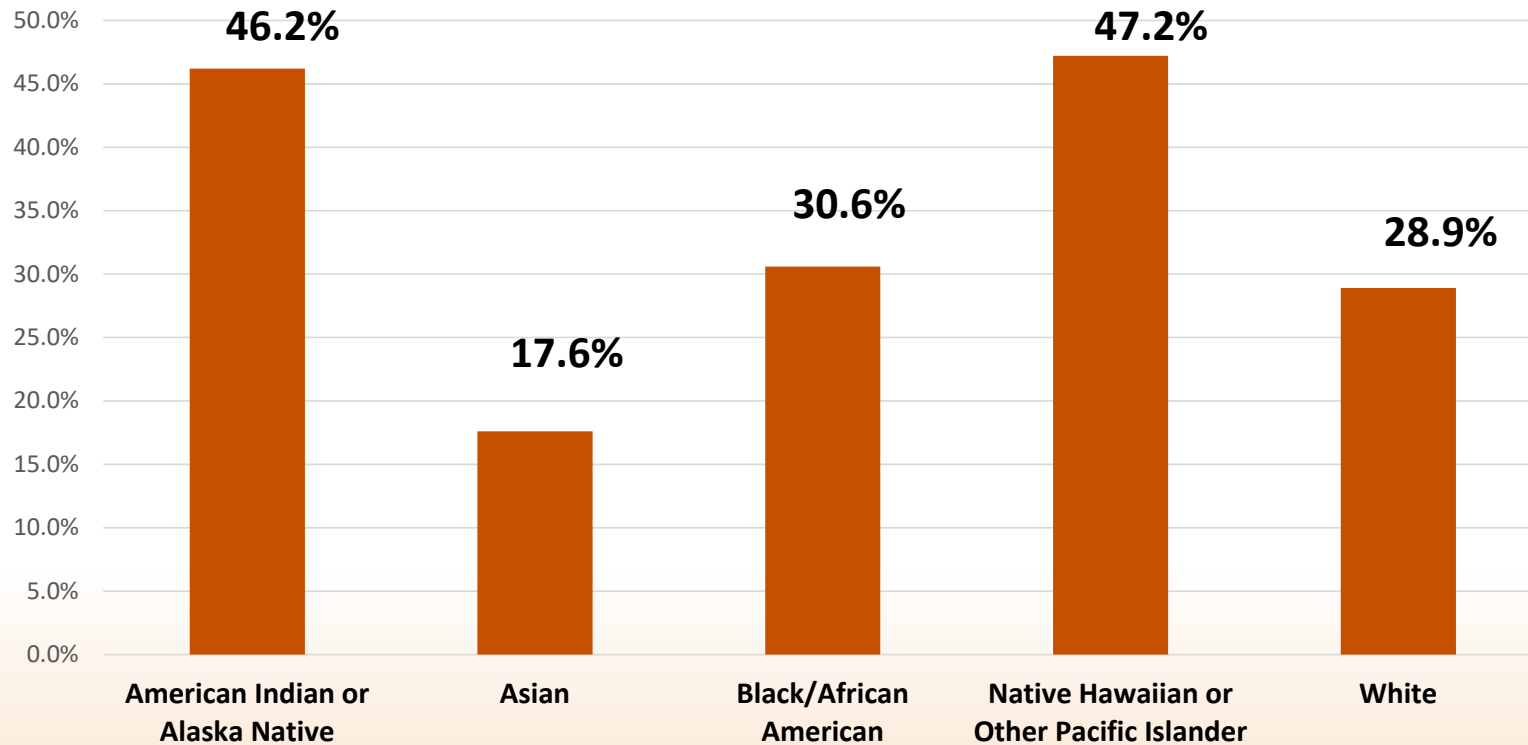
11%

**of students experienced
suicidal ideation in the last year**

- Transgender/gender non-conforming students were approximately four times more likely to experience suicidal ideation compared to their cisgender peers.
- Students of color were more likely to endorse suicidal ideation.



Female undergraduate victimization (nonconsensual penetration or sexual touching involving physical force) rates by race



Alcohol-facilitated Sexual Assault

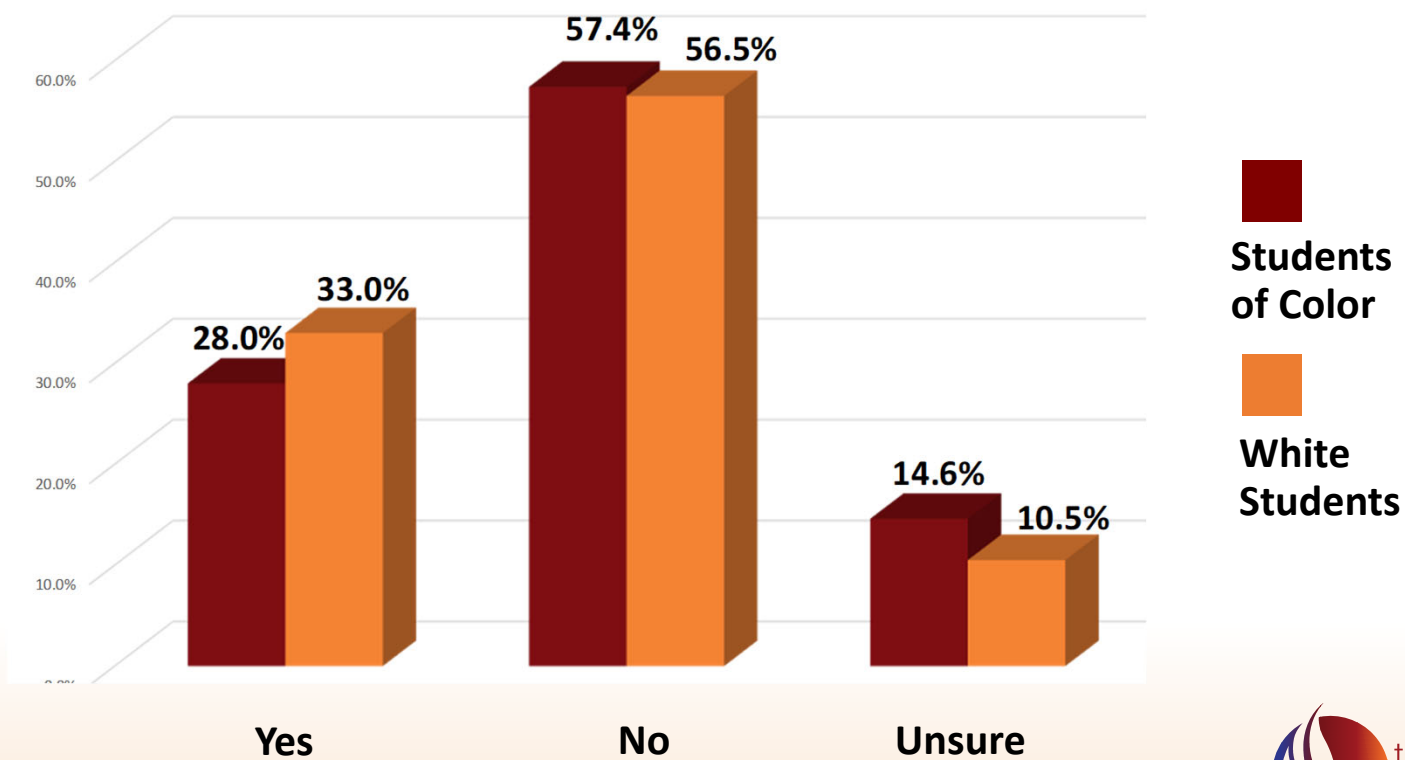
- Nationwide, **50-75%** of sexual assaults on college campuses involve the use of alcohol by either the victim, perpetrator, or both.
- At UW–Madison campus, **77%** of sexual assaults involve the use of alcohol.
- Majority of victims and perpetrators were ingesting alcohol



Color of Drinking Takeaways

1. Alcohol culture influences microaggressions and retention of students of color.
2. Students of all racial identities report feeling unsafe in high-risk drinking environments. *Safety for students of color in these high-risk drinking environments is impacted more.*
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Has your personal alcohol use or the alcohol use of others impacted your overall sense of belonging at UW–Madison?



Top belonging themes

Students of Color

- If you don't drink, you don't fit in at UW–Madison.
- Alcohol use by others makes me feel isolated.
- Alcohol use amplifies racial issues.

White Students

- Alcohol helps you fit in and belong.
- If you don't drink, you don't belong.
- Alcohol helps you meet new people.
- Drinking alcohol helps me feel like I belong at UW–Madison.
- Alcohol helps you bond with people socially.



Students of Color

If you don't drink you don't fit in at UW-Madison.

"If you don't drink then you're almost excluded from most of the university culture, since there's so much drinking involved, and people use parties to bond and socialize."

"A lot of people associate drinking culture with being a UW Madison student, and since I do not drink on campus, I doubted if I really belonged here during my first year"

The privileged culture around drinking and the idea that it is the normal thing to do and how people have fun in college makes me feel like I am not experiencing college the way I am supposed to and that I don't relate to my peers.?

Alcohol use by others, makes me feel isolated.

"I tend to feel isolated if I have a backpack on and am going to study while drink people are hooting and hollering as I walk by."

Alcohol use enhances racial issues.

"I fell that my type of drinking isn't the type others want to do. I prefer drinking a glass of wine/beer while sitting at home doing daily home things. The tailgate culture can be fun, and I love it sometimes, but the huge masses of drunk white people all around me always make me feel very hyperaware. Once there were only a few people of color at a tailgate, and somehow we all ended up helping another out when racial tensions arose with white tailgate goers. When I walk around State St or anywhere near bars/Langdon I am always aware of who is around me and if I am alone. I tend to feel isolated if I have a backpack on and am going to study while drink people are hooting and hollering as I walk by."

White Students

Alcohol helps you fit in and belong.

"It's part of the culture to drink. You fit in if you drink"

If you don't drink, you don't belong.

"I feel like you're most definitely looked down upon/considered an "outsider" if you do not partake in drinking at UW."

"I really don't drink much, and especially before I turned 21 (because I chose not to underage drink), I felt like I didn't belong at UW because I would decline going to parties or drinking together. I felt like an outsider."

Alcohol helps you meet new people.

"So I think drinking or just "going out" in general has been a positive thing because I have gotten to know more people that I don't typically chat with during the week."

Drinking alcohol helps me feel like I belong at UW-Madison.

"I think that enjoying getting drunk helps me feel like I belong here."

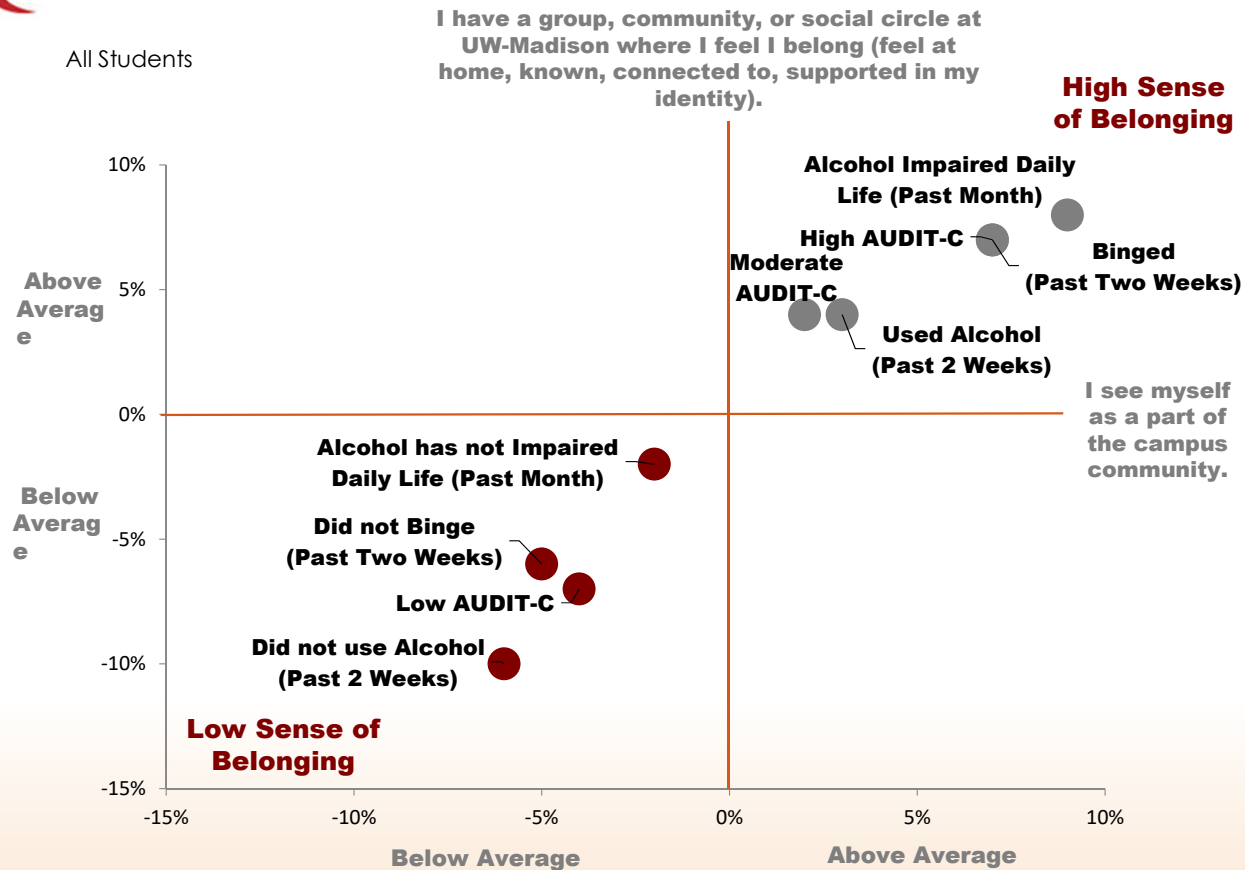
"participating in the alcohol culture here brings a feeling of belonging"

Alcohol helps you bond with people socially.

"Going out is a way to see all of your friends in a fun environment. A lot of my friends go to the same bars so I'm guaranteed to see friends out on most weekends"

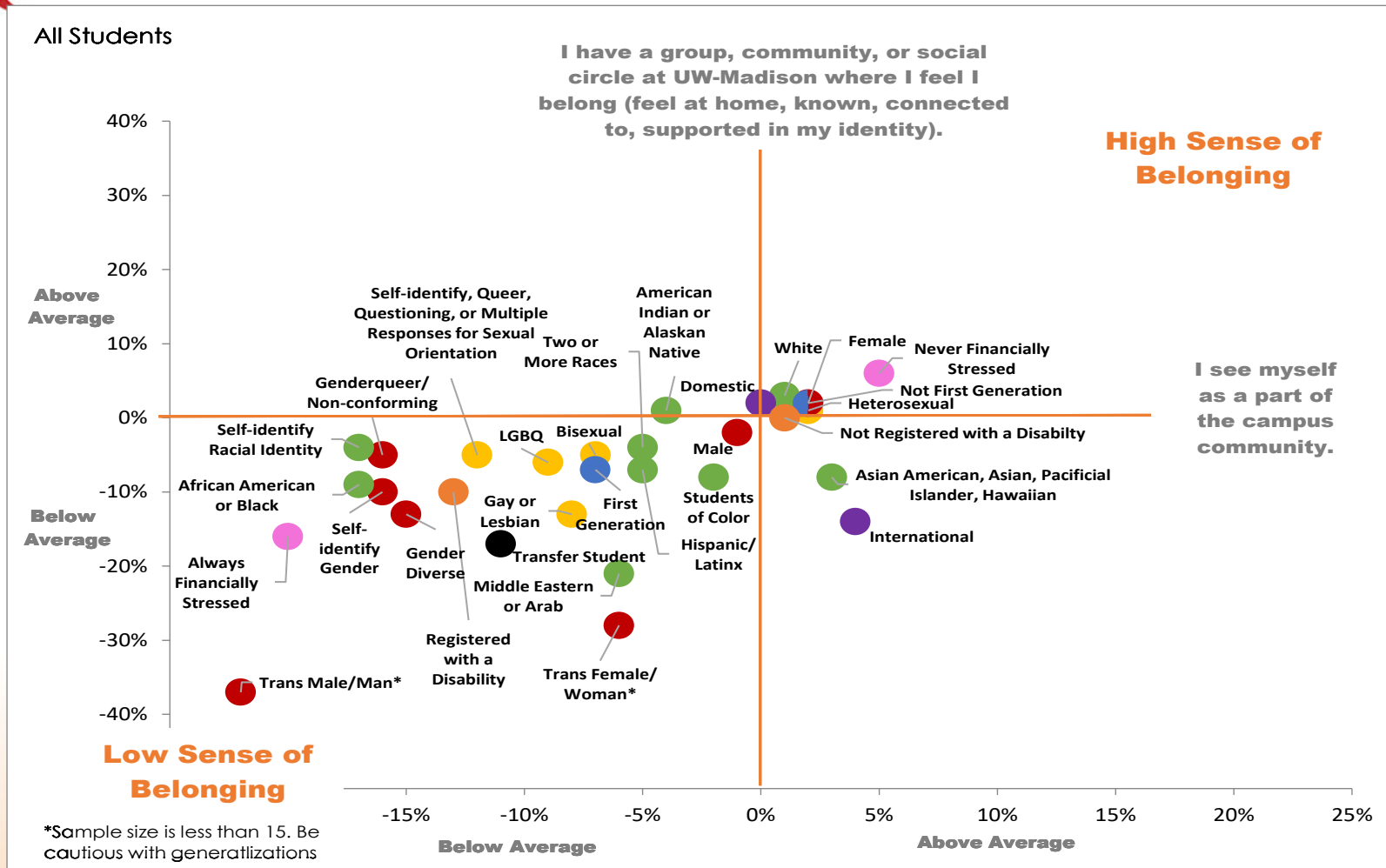


Alcohol use is related to belonging

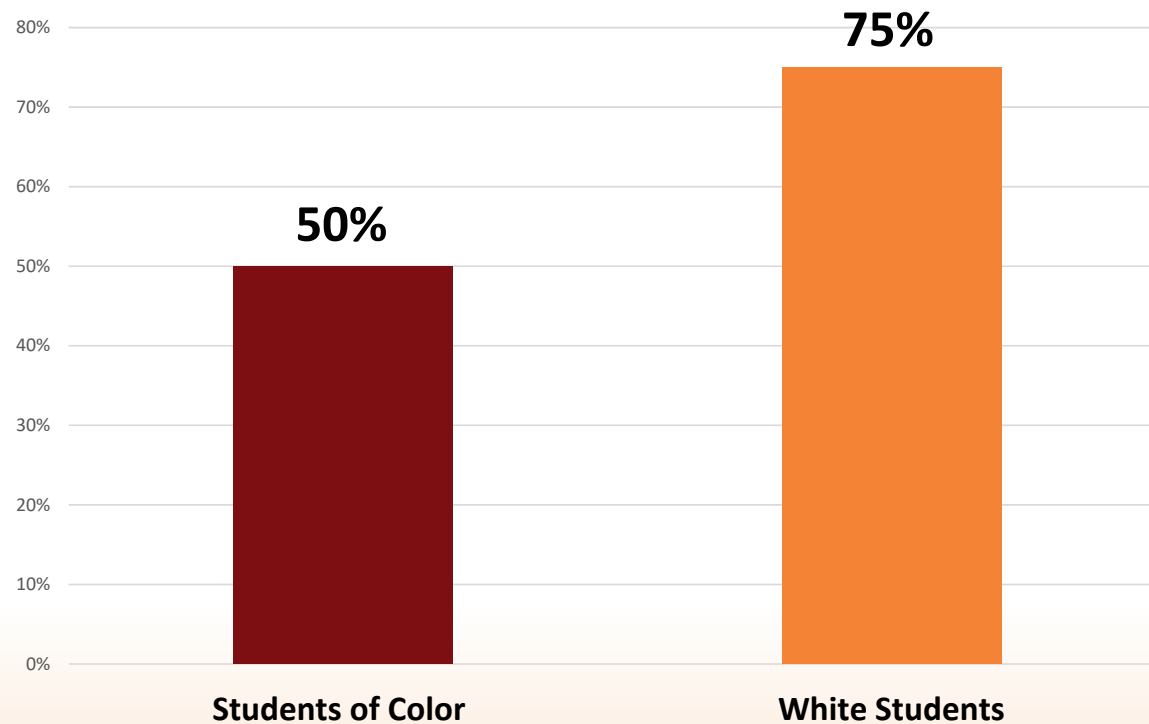




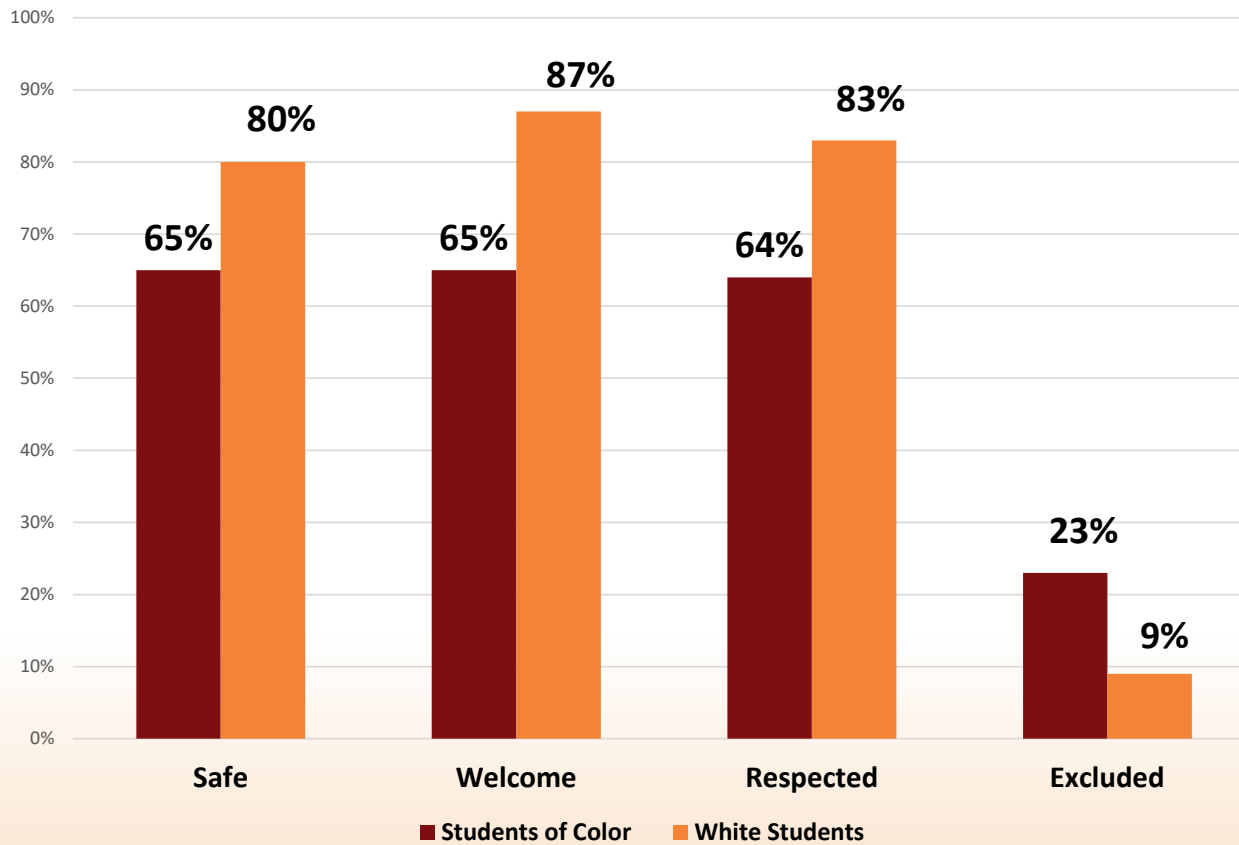
Belonging among marginalized populations



2016 UW–Madison Campus Climate Survey: How often do you feel like you belong?



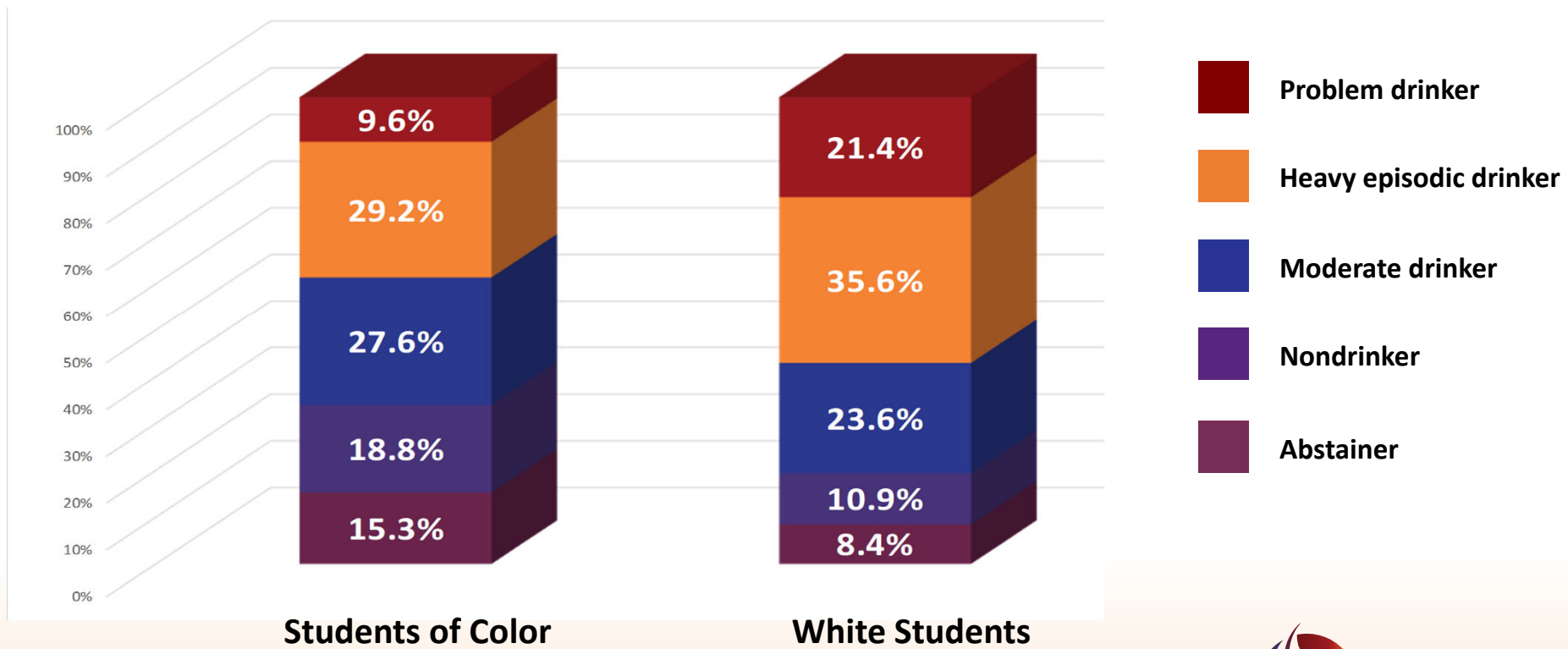
2016 UW–Madison Campus Climate Survey: How often do you feel....



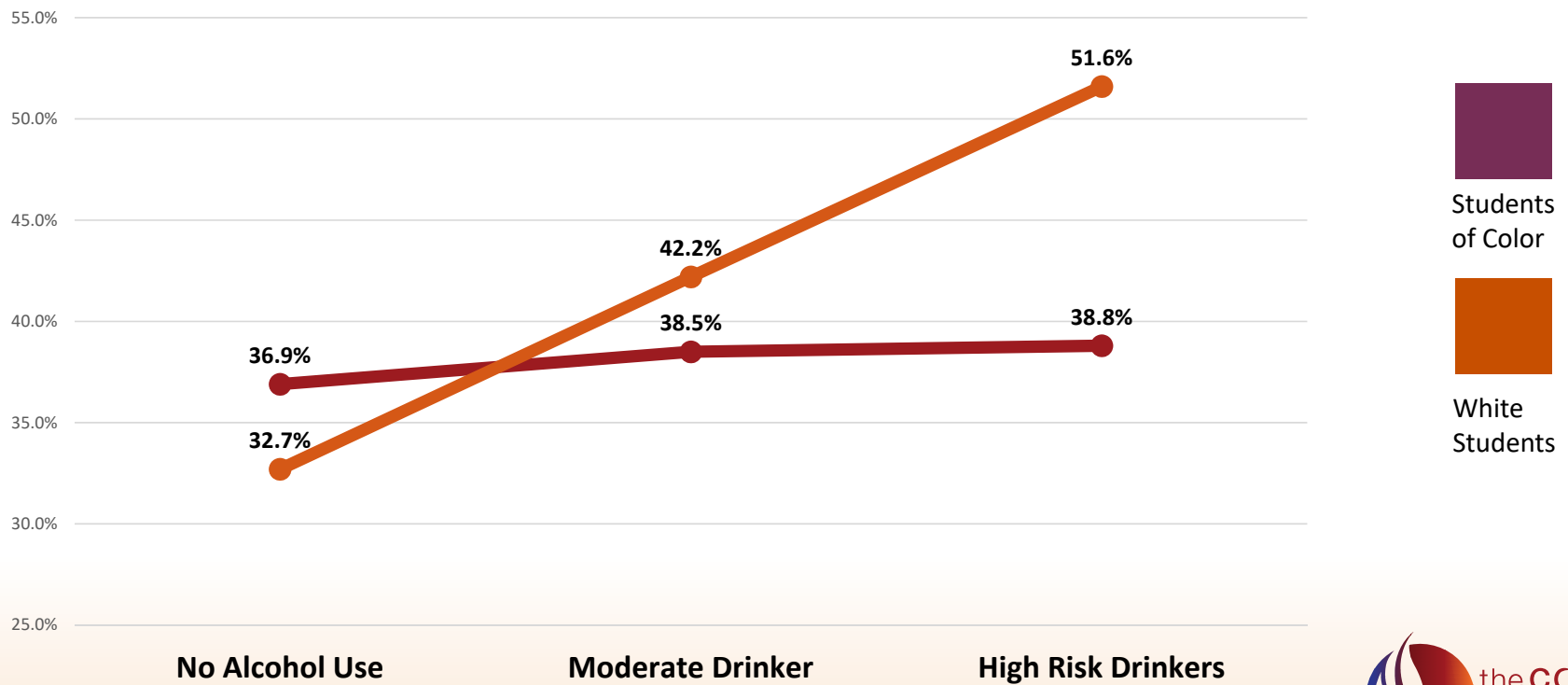
Color of Drinking Takeaways

1. Alcohol culture influences microaggressions and retention of students of color.
2. Students of all racial identities report feeling unsafe in high-risk drinking environments. *Safety for students of color in these high-risk drinking environments is impacted more.*
3. High-risk drinking is tied to student connection and belonging
4. Alcohol use by white students is a protective factor for academic and social success. *Allowances and exceptions are made academically to support drinkers and the alcohol culture.*

Drinker type by group

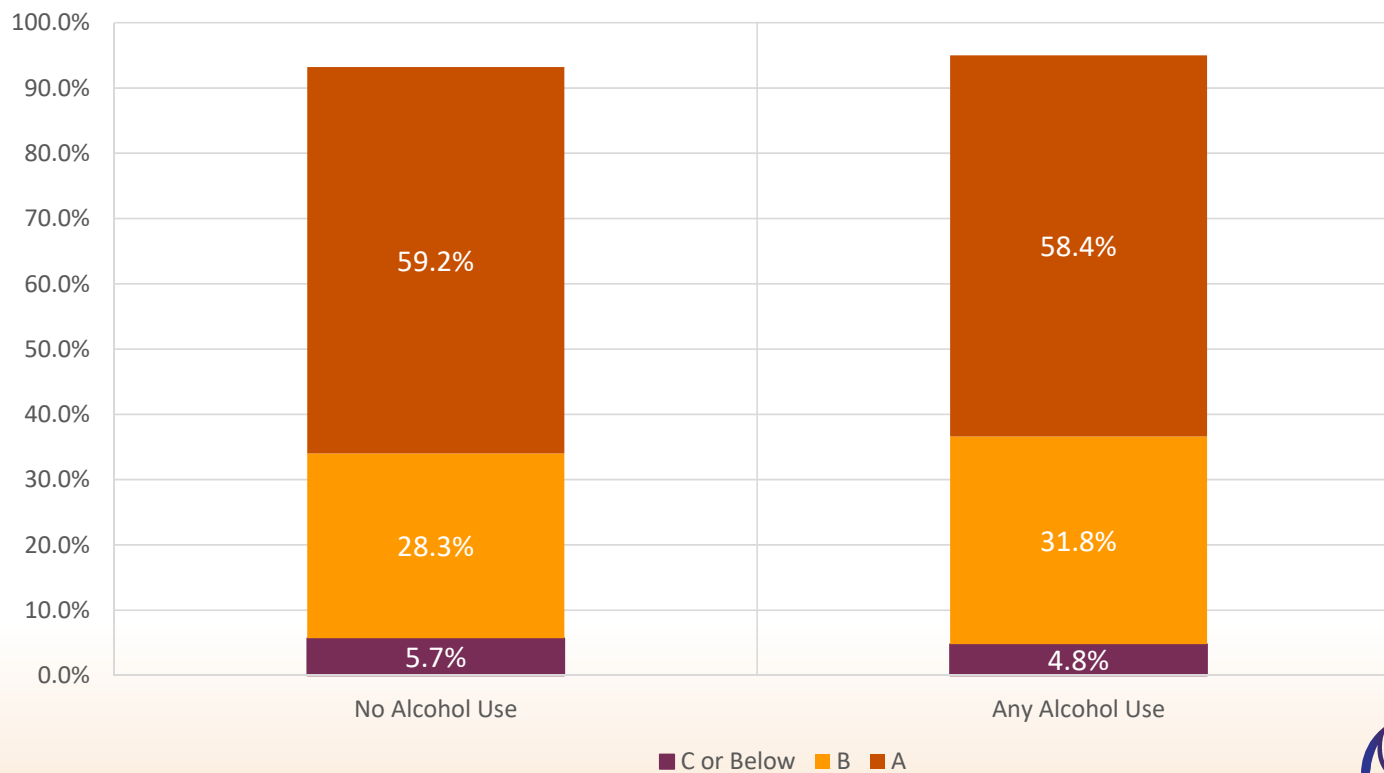


Percentage of Drinker Risk and Top Flourishing Scores (52-56) on Diener Flourishing Scale





2019 Healthy Minds data self-reported GPA and alcohol usage

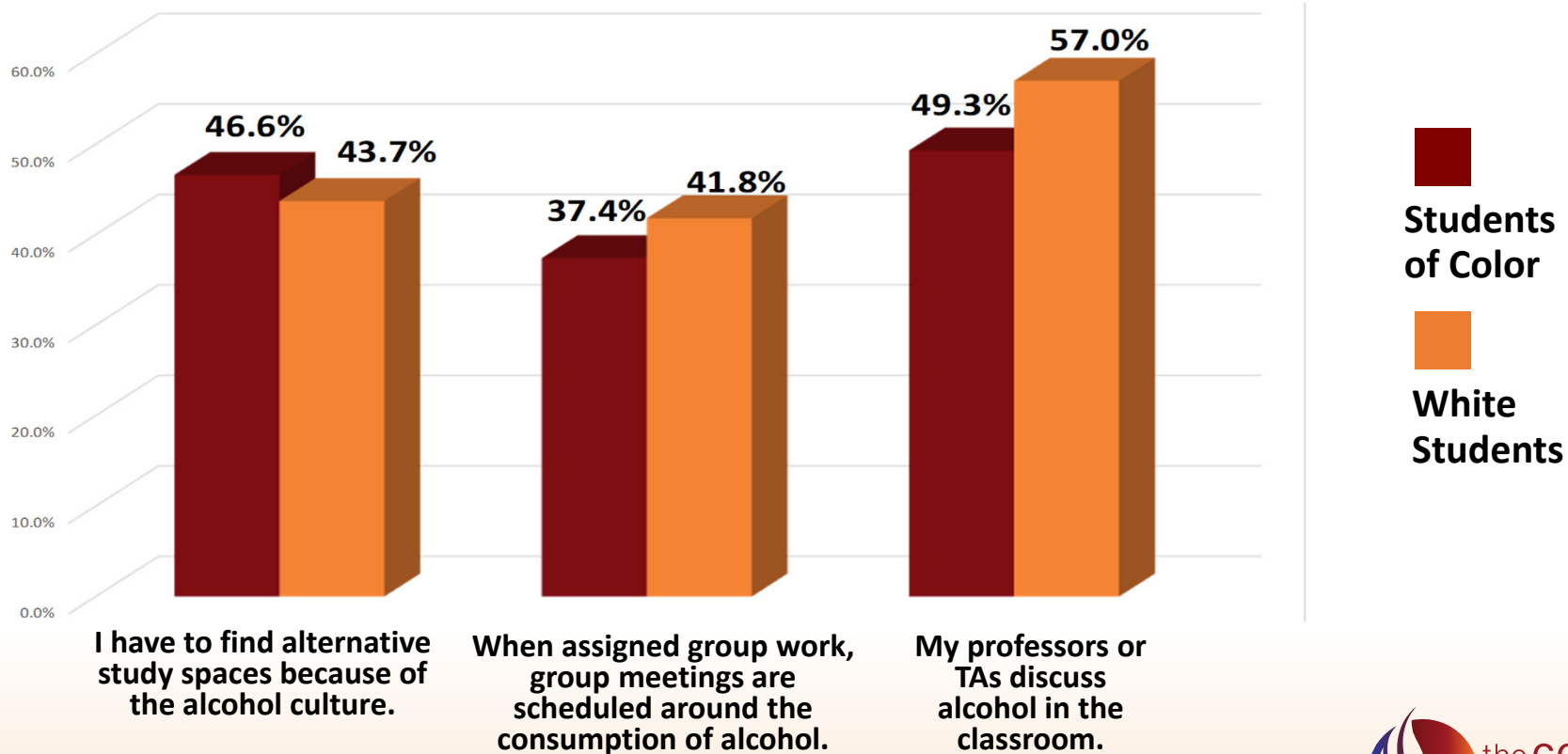


Campus Grade and Alcohol Trends

- 2019 average GPA of adjudicated alcohol students: 3.8
- Greek women (Highest Risk Female Group) consistently have higher GPAs
- 2019–2020 residents of residence halls with the highest-risk drinking had the highest GPAs.



Have you experienced the following?



Student Responses

*“It definitely has made me **feel awkward** in the classroom when **professors or TAs** constantly **talk about drinking** and maybe **having students meet up to drink.**”*

*“Everyone tries to force you to drink if you don’t and I have **lost friends** due to arguments over drinking, which affected my academic.”*

*“Not specifically my drinking, because when I've been a full-time student I have kept it to a minimum, but when working on group projects we have to **be aware of major events** like Halloween and Mifflin because there's a **general expectation that alcohol culture** will (at the very least) affect the **other people in my group.**”*

-Student of Color responses from Color of Drinking 1



Have you experienced the following because of your own alcohol use in the last year?

	Students of Color	White Students
Too hungover to attend class	18%	29%
Chose to drink instead of study	39%	48%
Received a poor final grade because I chose to drink instead of study	12%	13%
Missed class	16%	20%
Performed poorly on an assignment	16%	25%

Summary

- Our field's continued focus on drinkers is a way of centering whiteness and we need to stop.
- White drinkers are successful college students, and we will not reduce the impacts of drinking by focusing on individuals and reducing harms. This is not equitable.
- To decentralize whiteness, there needs to be movement toward intersectionality of issues (alcohol, sexual assault, mental health, etc.) and focus on fostering a sense of belonging amongst students.



Questions, thoughts, reactions?



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